

# News



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Connecticut Department of Public Health

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## Department of Public Health Urges All Connecticut Residents to Test for Radon Gas

**Hartford** - The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) urges Connecticut residents to test their home for radon, and, if necessary, mitigate high radon levels.

Radon is a naturally occurring colorless and odorless radioactive gas. Radon enters the home through small cracks and holes in the basement. At elevated levels, it can increase one's risk of developing lung cancer. Public health officials have found that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, behind cigarette smoking. Cigarette smokers who have radon in their home have an even greater risk of getting lung cancer. According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), an estimated 15,000-30,000 U.S. residents die from radon-induced lung cancer each year.

"We estimate that approximately one out of every five homes in Connecticut have high radon levels," stated DPH Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H. "Most of Connecticut is located in a zone where there is a high to moderate potential for having a radon issue in the air or water in one's home. That is why it is so important for people to test for radon in their homes."

The only way to know if your home has high radon levels is to test for it. Radon levels tend to increase inside the home during the heating season when homes are closed. It is best to conduct radon testing during the winter months.

DPH, EPA, the American Lung Association of Connecticut (ALA), and 16 participating local health departments are working together to highlight radon outreach, measurement and mitigation activities during January, which has been designated Radon Action Month across the country. A half-day conference titled *Reinvigorating Radon Action In Connecticut Through Partnerships* is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2006 at the ALA offices in East Hartford to serve as a kick-off event for Radon Action Month. Attendees will include a mix of private industry and public sector professionals all working toward the common goal of reducing radon-induced lung cancer.

In order to promote radon measurement in homes, ALA offers radon test kits for the low price of \$12. This price includes the test kit, laboratory analysis, tax, postage and handling. Since smokers are at a much greater risk of developing lung cancer if radon is present, information on quitting smoking will also be included.

To purchase your test kit call, call 1-800-LUNG-USA or visit the ALA website at <http://www.alact.org/>

For additional information on radon, contact the Connecticut Department of Public Health Radon Program at (860) 509-7367 or visit our website at <http://www.dph.state.ct.us/>

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